# THE CHAPLAIN'S ROLE IN COMBATING PREJUDICE

A MONOGRAPH

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THE CHAPLAIN'S ROLE IN COMBATING PREJUDICE.

I. INTRODUCTION

Dr. William C. Menninger speaking of prejudice and discrimination states that, " America's number-one social neurosis at the moment is prejudice and the resultant discrimination. No intelligent individual can be unaware of the social tension between various racial, social, and religious groups." (1) Prejudice is produced by insecurity and ignorance which operate to warp the personalities of both the prejudiced people and their victims. Prejudice is one of the most obstinate barriers blocking all attempts to cope with social problems. P rejudice must be attacked from many angles if it is to be reduced.

Findings in the field of anthropology have scientifically established that there is no evidence for correlating racial characteristics with inferiority or superiority of intelligence. Nor do differences in the cultures of peoples necessarily signify the inferiority or superiority of any people. These two facts, however, make very little impression on the majority of people.

There are sufficient facts to dispel the ignorance from which prejudices often arise. Prejudices, however, also have their origin in the area of emotion. Thus it would be naive to think that prejudices, racial and otherwise, will be wiped out by teaching anthropology to more people, necessary and important as that is. As Spinoza long ago pointed out,

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1. William C. Menninger, Psychiatry in a Troubled World, p 422 New York : Macmillan Co., 1948

" An emotion can neither be hindered nor removed save by a contrary emotion." (2) Modern psychological inquiry has reinforced Spinoza's insight. Our attack on prejudices must therefore include a frank recognition of their emotional nature and an understanding of how they are formed. When we understand their nature and origin, it becomes easier to plan for reducing or changing socially undesirable prejudices.

II. WHAT IS PREJUDICE ?

The origin of the word "prejudice" is interesting. It comes from the Latin word "praejudicium." Prae means "before" and judicium means "judgment." Judgment implies coming to a conclusion after a consideration of all the factors. Prejudice means jumping to a conclusion before considering the facts. A prejudice is an attitude we have toward a specific situation that we reach without sufficient consideration of the facts about that situation. It differs from an attitude founded on fact and knowledge, for in the case of a prejudice we form a judgment without the help of knowledge or reason. We often do not know how a prejudice arose or when it first began. We may not even be aware that we have any. But whether or not we are aware of prejudices, they influence our behavior. They may influence us even more if we are unaware of them.

Some scholars have pointed out that all complex human societies assign to different groups of individuals positions of different importance. The pretext for the different status

2. Baruch Spinoza, ETHICS, Part IV, Proposition VII. quoted in H. Powdermaker, Probing our Prejudices, p viii. New York: Harper, 1944

varies from differences in religion, sex, politics, or material possessions to differences in physical characteristics. In differentiating among human beings, the societies decide which are "better" and which are "worse." Then the society excludes and rejects those in the "worse" group. Finally, these patterns become fixed and unquestioned social customs. Racial discrimination is one example of this tendency to grant preferred status to some individuals. In this case the basis of preference is skin color.

Some scholars have speculated on the reasons for prejudice to determine which came first-- the lower status or the prejudice. In either case stereotyped thinking almost invariably asserts the inferiority of one group and the superiority of the other. Needless to say, these explanations are satisfying to the group on top and disturbing to the group on the bottom. Some observers maintain that these forms of prejudice are irrational, that they fill an emotional rather than intellectual need of those who hold them. It would be difficult, however, to understand social prejudices in terms of whether they are rational or irrational. Man utilizes all his faculties, both rational and irrational, in his attempt to justify his existence and his superiority to others.

Not all human prejudices have bad consequences. Some prejudices may have positive personal and social results. An aversion to a certain kind of garment is a positive prejudice which is not likely to produce any devastating effect in the life of society. Moreover, there are neutral prejudices, which do not help or harm. Many Americans are opposed to eating

horsemeat. Horsemeat would not harm the person who ate it; neither would his refusal to eat horsemeat damage either the horse or the non-eater (so long as he ate something else). In addition to the positive and neutral prejudices, there are destructive and negative prejudices. Among them are racial, religious, economic, and social prejudices, which threaten the integrity of individuals and of whole societies. Racial prejudices are indications of a disturbed and potentially unstable society. Racial prejudices involve not only a pattern of preferred status for some on the basis of skin color, but also feelings of hostility and aggression sometimes reflected in barbaric cruelty. This pattern cannot exist in a democratic society without arousing deep currents of guilt and conflict.

## III. THE SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

### A. THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE ARE

Human beings are very complex. In order to understand how prejudices are developed and how they can be overcome we must understand the nature of these human complexities. In each individual there are a variety of habits and emotions. Each individual embodys several patterns of behavior which are often contradictory. In every human being are found these opposing tendencies and a struggle between them. We know from experience that under certain circumstances hate can be changed to love, that intolerance can be changed to tolerance, and that fear may give way to courage.

Hate and love of particular people are not in our nature when we are born. Whom we learn to like or dislike, love or

hate will depend on our experiences-- experiences in our homes, in our neighborhood, in our schools, and the impressions these experiences make upon us. Some of these early impressions may be inaccurate and harmful. If we do not grow, these impressions will remain relatively fixed. But if we have the capacity and the will to learn, we may be able to change some of these early attitudes. Growth means change, not only physical such as growing taller and stronger, but also change in ideas and attitudes. One of the most outstanding characteristics which distinguishes man from other species is his capacity to learn. This capacity is continuous. This capacity enables us to take in information. It also enables us to change old habits and attitudes. All human beings have this capacity for growth and development regardless of the color of their skin, their social class, or their religion. It is this educability of man which has made progress possible.

We inherit biological traits which are determined in the germ plasm. But all our characteristics which are not of biological origin come from society, the culture which surrounds us from the day we are born. From the society which surrounds us we acquire our language. Our manners, attitudes and ideas grow out of a social context. Our religion, and even the way we earn our living is largely under the control of the society into which we are born. The newborn infant has no prejudices. How then does he acquire them?

By the time we reach secondary school we have what one observer has called " pictures in our mind " of many people

with whom we have had little or no contact. These pictures are known as stereotypes. There is the picture of the Negro, usually lazy, happy-go-lucky, undependable, with black skin, wide nostrils, and kinky hair. Perhaps one of the pictures is that of the "wop", a swarthy person, quick to anger, who will pull out a dagger, if provoked. The stereotype of the Jew is an unattractive old man with a beard, eating peculiar foods, talking loudly with gestures. Mention an Oriental, either Chinese or Japanese, and we see a picture of the dreaded "yellow peril," our country swamped by slant-eyed, yellow laundrymen. An Irishman may immediately bring up the picture of an unreasonable person, always losing his temper and getting into fights and brawls. Although we may never have seen them, we will have pictures in our minds of a Russian, Turk, an Eskimo. Some of these pictures may be attractive and others ugly. Most of the time they have little connection with reality.

How we get these "pictures in the mind" is a long story and goes back to early childhood. We learn much before we go to school. We are constantly receiving impressions and having experiences from which we learn. Formal schooling is only a part of our education. Our parents, friends, books and magazines, the movies, radio, TV, travel-- all these are also important factors in our education.

When white children in urban and rural sections of Georgia and in urban areas of Tennessee were compared with children in New York City, their basic attitudes towards the Negro were found to be the same. Students of the problem now generally accept the view that children's attitudes toward Negroes are

determined chiefly " not by contact with Negroes, but by contact with the prevailing attitudes toward Negroes." (3) It is not the Negro child, but the idea of the Negro child, that influences children.

Rarely do American parents deliberately teach their children to hate members of another racial, religious, or nationality group. Many parents, however, communicate the prevailing racial attitudes to their children in subtle and sometimes unconscious ways. Parents often forget their influence on the formation of their children's opinions and frequently deny that they have ever said anything to their children that would encourage racial prejudice. To the little tot of two or three years, his mother and father are godlike creatures to be imitated and followed. In addition to supplying the child's material needs, the parents are also the child's main source of knowledge. A child imitates not only the activities of his parents but also reflects their feelings, attitudes and opinions. As the child grows older the " pictures in his mind" about other people become stronger and are reinforced by society.

Parents are merely one of the elements of the complex pattern of social forces that influence the child's racial, religious, and social attitudes. The development of racial prejudices in children reflects among other things, the complexities in his family relationships, the type of community in which he lives, his school experiences, and the religious influence brought to bear upon him.

There is another way in which we get false ideas about an

3.Eugene L. Horowitz, Development of Attitude Toward Negroes, from Archives of Psychology,1936,No 194. quoted in Readings in Social Psychology, p 517. New York: Henry Holt& Co., 1947

entire group of people. This is the way of generalization. We conclude that because one member of a group acted in a certain way, all members of that group will act in the same way. Such reasoning is called making a false generalization. We all suffer from this unfortunate habit of making generalizations, especially about racial and religious groups or nationalities other than our own. We do not make them as frequently about our own group. If we are white Protestants and a member of our group cheats, we do not condemn all white Protestants. If we are Catholics and one of our group lies, we do not say," All Catholics are liars." In order to be clear thinking individuals we must be aware of our tendency to make false generalizations.

B. SOME SOCIAL SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

Society is no haphazard affair. It is a well-organized system. Society tells us what to do and how to do it. There are certain forms of behavior called patterns, which society expects us to follow in almost everything we do. The patterns vary from one society to another, and from one historical period to another in the same society, but some form of patterning is always present. We are seldom aware of the degree to which our behavior, important and unimportant, is regulated by the pattern of the society in which we live. We all know that it is not easy to go against the conventional patterns of our society. The price we pay for following a different pattern is ridicule, ostracism, or, in severe cases, punishment.

Not only does society regulate our behavior but also our

ideas and feelings. Society is constantly affirming and reinforcing the pictures early formed in the individual's mind. In many ways society interposes and directs the way people think and feel about minority groups. Society tends to keep alive various stereotyped concepts which which are passed from one generation to the next. Patterns of race relations in the South can leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to the inferior position the Negro is forced to occupy. In the North and West, the social patterning is not quite as obvious in regard to Negro-White relationships; but in many subtle ways, the North and the West also stress the inferior position of the Negro. Society sees to it that few meet the distinguished Negro college professor or the Negro artist. Society, in all sections of the country, conspires to keep alive the picture that the Negro is a "dirty nigger." He is pictured as an inferior creature suited only to be a servant or to occupy some other menial role. He is regarded as someone either to laugh at or to fear. All the social patterns in the community relating to Negroes strengthen the " picture in the mind."

Of course Negroes are not the only ones for whom we have pictures in the mind. We have pictures of the politically-minded Irish Catholic, of the rich Jew, of the Mexican migratory worker, of the "wop" immigrant, of the Chinaman-- and of many others. All of these people are likewise regarded as dirty. The epithets, " dirty Catholic," "dirty Jew," " dirty wop," are common-- and the young child hears them long before he ever sees a Catholic, a Jew, or an Italian.

It happens that much of the important work of the world is dirty work. We could not get along without the farmer and the miner. Digging coal and planting crops will inevitably make the miner and farmer dirty. An industrial worker in the steel mill is likely to end the day grubby and dirty. This work is dirty regardless of the race or nationality of the worker. There is nothing basically evil about dirt itself, but through the ages it has acquired a deep symbolism of evil. That is, associations of evil have been connected with it for such a long time that people mistakenly think dirt is evil.

Racial symbols are so prevalent in the American scene that all normal children eventually perceive them. They observe segregated residential areas, segregated and often inferior schools for racial minorities, segregated recreational facilities, and in some areas of the country segregated transportation. Such observations contribute to the young child's attitude toward these individuals whom society consistently labels as being inferior.

C. SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

There is another cause for the development of prejudice which arises primarily out of a person's insecurity. Some people are so insecure in their jobs or social position that they need someone to look down upon in order to bolster their own confidence. There are thousands and thousands of prejudiced people who fall in this category, people who are insecure through their own lack of ability or opportunity and who feel more secure if they can find someone or some group of people to blame. It keeps them from feeling like failures. They reason that they have failed not because of lack of ability, but because the

"wicked minority" has tricked them.

History records man's need to find a scapegoat on whom he can vent his anger, frustration, fears and inadequacies. Men have used many objects and many persons upon which to project their insecurity. This insecurity is really a fear, usually a vague, ill-defined sense of danger, of being conquered by this group that is different in some way. Perhaps we think that they threaten our job or social standing. By the use of a psychological mechanism we project upon them our own feelings of inadequacy thus raising our own self-esteem, pride and power. We attempt to maintain our security by humiliating, depreciating and persecuting any individual or group that seems to threaten us. In that way we hope to keep that individual or group harmless, helpless, dependent and subservient.

It is among these people,--- people who are afraid they will not be able to make a living, afraid they will not succeed, afraid that people willnot like them,--- that we usually find the deepest prejudices. It is these people who will refuse to work beside a Negro in a factory, who get excited if a Jew moves into the neighborhood, and who shudder at the idea of the Chinese settling in their city. Obviously the scapegoat is not the same in all societies, but the scapegoat suffers, whoever he is.

D. SOME RELIGIOUS SOURCES OF PREJUDICE.

Paradoxically, religion as generally practiced in America must be regarded as a passive force which keeps prejudice alive. The church certainly has a role in the development of racial attitudes. In their instructional materials many religious

groups attempt to deal directly with the problem of improving intergroup relations. The moral and religious basis for good human relationships is generally well expressed, but there is a general vagueness about how to translate these words into concrete daily behavior. The major difficulty in the translation of these moral and religious ideas into social reality lies in the fact that the churches themselves are predominantly segregated institutions. There is the dilemma of how to teach the moralities of brotherhood in racially segregated institutions.

Studies of the influence of religious training on racial attitudes have revealed a paradox. They show that individuals who profess strong religious affiliations or attend church frequently are more likely to be prejudiced than those who do not. Although these results are not entirely conclusive there is at least a strong suggestion that religious training in itself does not make the individual more tolerant toward other races. There is even some suggestion that under the present pattern of religious training it might tend to make him more prejudiced. While more study is needed in this area the available evidence suggests that churches do not now play an effective part in developing positive racial and religious attitudes. Churches, unfortunately, tend to reflect the prevailing racial attitudes of the larger community. For the most part the churches, like the schools, do not take the initiative in attempting to develop a systematic program for the improvement of racial attitudes. Such a program would be extremely difficult as long as racially segregated churches exist.

In recent years various Protestant denominations have issued statements and passed resolutions in favor of better race

relations in America. As early as 1946, the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations of what is now the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. made the following statement: " The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America hereby recognizes the pattern of segregated in race relations as unnecessary and undesirable and a violation of the gospel of love and human brotherhood. Having taken this action, the Federal Council requests its constituent communions to do likewise. As proof of their sincerity in this renunciation they will work for non-segregated church and a non-segregated society." (4)

In spite of this and many similar statements the Christian Protestant churches represent one of the most entrenched areas of racial segregation in American society. Of the nearly seven million Protestant Negroes less than one half of one percent worship regularly in non-segregated churches. This discrepancy between ideals and practice is all the more conspicuous in churches and religious institutions, since their reason for being is their ethical and moral role.

Just a few years ago, the research staff of the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth asked major church organizations to furnish information concerning their racial policies and specific programs designed to combat racial prejudice in their parishes. The answers suggested these conclusions: A majority of these church organizations had no

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4. Quoted in K.B. Clark, Prejudice and Your Child, p 104. Boston: Beacon Press, 1955

specific programs in the area of improving race relations. Some replies stated that such programs were unnecessary, because the principle of Christian brotherhood was implicit in their religion. There was evidence, sometimes explicit, that some of the social-welfare agencies affiliated with religious organizations and denominations practiced racial discrimination and religious sectarianism in the selection of the individuals whom they would serve. Many of the pronouncements and programs described by these organizations seemed vague and tentative; there was little evidence that the fight for interracial justice was being waged in a definite, systematic, vigorous manner and as a sustained aspect of their over-all religious program. None of these groups described a concrete program designed specifically to help children develop more positive attitudes and patterns of behavior in their relations with individuals of other racial or religious groups.

There is no evidence that churches actively encourage the development of negative racial attitudes. However, the churches actively do little to counteract the negative racial attitudes produced by other forces in society. These findings present a significant challenge to priests, ministers and rabbis and other religious educators. As long as this challenge is not met successfully thechurch must be considered still another area of our society in which negative intergroup attitudes are not effectively discouraged.

E. SOME ECONOMIC SOURCES OF PREJUDICE

Our economic system has long been characterized by antagonisms between laboring groups and employers. Each group tends to hold the other responsible for all that goes wrong

in economic matters. This conflict has historical roots in the relations that have existed between capital and labor since the rise of the modern industrial system.

Aside from the conflict between employer and employee, economic factors play a decided role in all forms of contemporary prejudice. Much of what passes for race or color prejudice is basically economic. The fear of losing economic position is often rationalized in terms of racial, national, or religious prejudices. Prejudices might well be defined as forms of defense reaction against loss of status.

The poor white sharecropper of America would like more of the good things of life. But no matter how hard they work, the majority are denied such things which most of us consider bare essentials. And so they feel helpless and insecure and angry because they are not given the basic economic opportunities. But instead of finding out what is wrong with the whole system of sharecropping, they blame the Negro. If a colored man shows some sign of getting ahead, the poor white frequently becomes madly jealous and takes out his jealousy in some act of violence against the Negro. The prejudice of the poor white against the Negro goes back to before the Civil War when the colored slave did the skilled labor which the white worker thought should be reserved for them. Today, the poor white still regards the Negro sharecropper as his rival, one who must be kept down so that the poor white can get ahead. And the same poor white, who is looked down upon and even despised by the more prosperous members of his own race, finds satisfaction in looking down upon someone whom he considers beneath him. The Negro provides a most convenient scapegoat, on which the poor white can vent his anger and frustration because of his own low position in society.

Or, one can point to another type of person who is prejudiced. A business man,whose father was a poor immigrant from the working class, is now a fairly prosperous member of the middle class. He would like to conceal his early background of poverty and have everyone think that he was always a member of his present group. He feels that he must always be on the alert or otherwise he will not be one of the inner circle of his business associates. So when the latter condemn the immigrant or the workers our businessman makes his complaints louder than the others. He does this because he is afraid. He is new in his position and uncertain. He feels that he must at all cost maintain his new status.

Tension and hostilities due to prejudices between different economic groups in a community prevent it from making progress. Development and progress come only through cooperation, not through strife. If people will not work together, they will be exploited against each other. If a group of white workers refuse to work with Negroes or to take them into the unions, the Negroes will be forced to work for less than the whites, and this will in turn reduce the wages of the white workers, since the employers will always have a source of cheap labor on hand with which to replace them. If part of a community is kept on a poverty level, the whole community suffers. The hates and hostilities which have developed because of segregation have prevented the South from progressing as rapidily as the other sections of the country.

Occasionally, when the tensions developed by these hostilities become too much for the people to stand, demonstrations, race riots and lynching break out. Recent race riots in our industrial cities of the North show that the tension is not

confined to the South. Large groups of Negroes are crowded into the poorest sections of the city with almost no recreational facilities. There are thousands of white workers who have been economically insecure all their lives. These white workers are afraid the Negroes may take their jobs. They show resentment if Negroes are promoted from an unskilled to a skilled job. They feel better if they have someone to look down upon. Society is always the loser even if hostilities and tensions are under cover. A community is not as rich as it might be if all the members in it cannot contribute according to their individual potentialities.

IV. WHAT PREJUDICE DOES TO US.

A. WHAT PREJUDICE DOES TO THE VICTIM.

Prejudice is not just an academic matter, but is a profoundly important problem that vitally affects the lives of all people.

The most obvious effect of prejudice is on the person against whom the prejudice is directed. His entire existence may be tragically affected. He may have to live in filth, squalor, and disease, receive less instruction, and earn less money, all because he is a member of a group against whom the dominant members of society are prejudiced. To be sure there are certain individuals who somehow achieve high goals despite the prejudice directed against them. Nevertheless the majority of the group often suffer under crippling prejudices.

Under the pressure of prejudice an individual may become bitter and disillusioned and withdraw as completely away from the dominant group as is possible. He may become aggressive against the dominant group, and even become aggressive

against people of his own group over whom he has some authority. Or the victim of prejudice may adopt a policy of appeasement flattering and fawning on members of the dominant group. Still another possibility is that the member of a minority group really accepts and believes what the dominant group says about his people, that is, that they are inferior. This is the most tragic of the possible psychological reactions.

B. WHAT PREJUDICE DOES TO THE SUBJECT

What about the people who hold prejudices? Does prejudice help them to overcome their fears, insecurities and feelings of frustration and failure? On the contrary. The prejudiced person is prevented from seeing the real reasons for his emotional deficiencies and failure. Prejudice condemns him to permanent fear and insecurity. He continues to blame the Jew, the Negro or some other scapegoat and therefore does nothing about the real situation with which these people have no connection. Prejudice makes impossible any real solution of economic, social or personal difficulties. We may go on hating, but that will not change our economic position, nor give us talent or success.

In a very real sense prejudice stultifies the full development of the person holding it. If the majority of one's energy is expended on negative attitudes there is not much left for other activities. If this process goes on continuously over a long period of time, the person may become mean and unfriendly not only toward the people against whom he is prejudiced, but toward other people as well. His whole nature becomes thwarted and all his human relationships are affected. His whole life narrows. He will refuse to know anyone who

looks different from himself, or comes from another part of the world, or practices another religion. He loses all the richness that comes from contact with other people. He is not at one with others but unreasonably suspicious of them. Such a person represents a step backward in the development of humanity.

C. WHAT PREJUDICE DOES TO SOCIETY

There is a third result of prejudice-- the effect on society. Does prejudice aid society to function and flourish? Tension and hostilities due to prejudices between different groups in the community prevent that society from making progress. Real development and progress result from cooperation and are hampered by strife. Occasionally when the tensions developed by these hostilities become too much for the people to stand, demonstrations, race riots and lynching break out.

Society is always the loser even if no overt action takes place. Certainly, a community is not at its best when a large number of people are bitter because they are denied their rightful individual opportunities. Some of our crime and delinquency can be traced directly to this kind of discrimination. A community is not as rich as it might be if all the members in it cannot contribute according to their individual potentialities. Our civilization is based on contributions from every race and nation, and we can ill afford to lose any of them.

If minority groups are prevented from making their contributions, we lose not only important inventions, but we also are denied the personal richness that comes from the mingling of people. Difference is something to be valued rather than

despised. It makes our culture richer, more varied, and infinitely more interesting.

We pay a terrific price for our prejudices-- all of us, the victims, the people who hold the prejudices, and the society of which we are a part. Disease, death and crime are part of the price the victim pays. Wasted potentialities, warped personalities, lowered economic standards, conflicts and tensions which are obstacles to progress are part of the high cost we pay. We who boast about our high standards, about our efficiency, about our ideals cannot afford our prejudices. We who have carved a nation out of the wilderness, who have led the world in technological progress, who have fostered high ideals concerning the dignity and freedom of all human beings, must do something about our prejudices.

V. THE MILITARY SITUATION

During recent years the Armed Forces have continuously and vigorously implemented principles of equality of opportunity and treatment for Negro personnel. In spite of the fact that "progress can be reported" we cannot ignore the obvious fact that Army life reflects the widespread prejudices and discriminations of civilian life. The Armed Forces, within their own sphere, have developed notable examples of racial coordination and integration in housing, transportation, religious worship, schooling, recreation, and other aspects of of community life for service personnel and their families. Policies and programs currently in affect give promise of further resolving many of the perplexing problems which center around situations where race is a factor.

A clear statement of the position of the Department of

Defense was made in a radio address on the 17th of February 1954, by Dr. John A. Hannah, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Personnel. Said Dr. Hannah: " The obligation to defend our country and our beliefs are borne equally by all our citizens without regard to race or color or religion.... we believe in the essential dignity of every human being, and that, within certain limits necessary to maintain an orderly society, each individual should have an opportunity to determine the course and pattern of his existence.... It should be a real gratification to all thinking Americans to know that our Armed Forces are leading the way in demonstrating both at home and abroad that America provides opportunities for all her people.... In spite of all predictions to the contrary, I have yet to find a field commander in any service that has anything but commendation for complete racial integration.... We are demonstrating in action as well as words that we really believe in Social Justice, Economic Justice, and Political Justice for all people of all races and colors...." (5)

A military society has the advantage of being able to insist on compliance with official policy. A commander can say to a white sergeant who objects to a Negro boy coming into the Scout Troop: " Sergeant, the Army policy favors integration. Since you don't go along with the policy, perhaps you'd better not apply for reenlistment when this hitch is over." All opposition to the Negro Scout magically disappears. There seems

5. John A. Hannah, Integration in the Armed Forces, p 1, Washington, D.C.: US Gov't Printing, 1955

to be some evidence that personnel in long term military service develop a certain tolerance toward people of different races and religions. Although this may be all to the good it falls short of the full acceptance of other people which is necessary if prejudice is to be overcome. To put up with people because one must is not quite the same as accepting them as equals. Have we really come to believe in social justice or is the elimination of racially duplicated facilities and operations the result of necessary economies in manpower, material and money?

VI. WHAT CAN THE CHAPLAIN DO ABOUT PREJUDICE?

Perhaps it is too idealistic to hope that all American people will realistically face the problem of racial and religious prejudice. However, the problem must be faced if disaster is to be avoided. Perhaps the Chaplain begins his role in this matter by recognizing himself and challenging others to recognize that we cannot talk about a belief in the brotherhood of man and at the same time treat minorities in our communities so shabbily. To talk of the supremacy of any group over any other is to make a farce of the democracy we profess. We cannot have psychological, social or emotional maturity as long as we continue to seek out some scapegoat on whom to fix the blame.

A. THE CHARACTER GUIDANCE PROGRAM

In the Character Guidance Program the Chaplain has an opportunity to discuss the whole range of problems involving human relationships and interpersonal activities. We know that man can and does learn, that his attitudes, opinions, and behavior have changed throughout the years and will continue to change. We know,too, that these changes can be directed

toward certain goals. The reduction of prejudice in ourselves and in society is one of the most basic problems. It is intertwined with all other social problems. It can and must be tackled.

A Chaplain can help individuals to try to reduce their own prejudices. The task will take the patient work, creative intelligence and persistent effort of us all. But each one of us must make his own beginning. Each one must try to improve the situation in his own neighborhood and community to prevent an outbreak of both organized and unorganized attacks on minority groups.

In the Character Guidance Program the Chaplain can help the military person see that the kinds of prejudice we have been describing are contrary to the essence of American Democracy. The matter can be presented on the basis of fair play and justice. If men believe in justice rather than injustice, if they wish to develop all the potentialities of all the people in the country, then all can and must set out to do something about this disease of prejudice which eats into the heart of our nation.

The Chaplain can challenge men to recognize prejudice in themselves. There is hardly anyone in our society without some prejudice. To rout the enemy we must first recognize him. The denial of the existence of prejudice in ourselves does not take it away or make it any less potent. We must bring our prejudices out into the open, admit them honestly, and examine them carefully. The Chaplain can help men to distinguish between their prejudices and their opinions which are based on careful, considered judgment. We can then label this or that opinion or form of behavior in ourselves as prejudice. The next step,

then, is to attempt to eradicate or materially reduce our prejudices. Prejudices will probably not disappear overnight. Gradually, however, they should become weakened and eventually many of them will be routed. If, after an honest appraisal of himself, a man finds that, in spite of his strong efforts, some prejudice still remains, he must be careful not to act on it. For instance, if one is prejudiced against someone, make a special attempt to see his good points and be fair to him. One may never like him, if prejudice remains, but at least one can refrain from abusing him.

B. THE CHAPLAIN'S RELIGIOUS PROGRAM

The Chaplain is relatively free to develop his own religious program within the military framework. In his services of worship, informal discussion groups or formal Bible study hours, the Chaplain can do a great deal to provide moral guidance in the area of racial attitudes and behavior. The Chaplain has a ready made congregation of many races and nationalities which he may influence to become a true united brotherhood of believers. Many religious groups have made pronouncements in which they recognize the pattern of segregation in race relations to be unnecessary and undesirable and a violation of the gospel of love and human brotherhood. Such statements are usually vague and tentative. The fight for interracial justice must be waged in a definite, systematic, vigorous manner and must be a sustained aspect of every Chaplain's over-all religious program. The Chaplain in his religious program must be free from the compulsion to conform to the existing patterns of social attitudes, values and norms found in the larger society. Any refusal to take the initiative

must inevitably result in loss of effective moral leadership and an inability to exert a positive influence on the racial attitudes of military personnel.

C. THE CHAPLAIN'S PERSONAL EXAMPLE.

The Chaplain can do much by his personal example and attitude to further constructive racial attitudes. He must let it be known that he is available to all people and that he will be impartial and objective in extending his help and his ministry to all. In his relations with people he must show that there is a difference between paternalism ( that is, loving down, loving in "their place") and true religious respect of one human being for another. The Chaplain must never use hateful terms that slur any group and must show disapproval when others use them. He should not tell stories, however funny, that reflect on any group nor laugh at such stories. He must extend common courtesies and titles of address to persons of all groups regardless of their position. The Chaplain must keep a close check on his own thoughts and feelings. He must guard against any tendency to blame whole groups for what is done by an individual of that group. When families of a new racial or cultural group move on the Post, the Chaplain should take the lead in extending a cordial welcome.

The Chaplain must always be ready to meet with individuals or groups of people who differ in their religious convictions. An understanding of people and a knowledge of facts will go far to disarm prejudice. A potent source of prejudice is ignorance. We are likely to fear what we do not fully understand. Suspicion is often the product of misunderstanding. When we are rightly informed as to the beliefs and practices of

our neighbors, we may still disagree with them profoundly, but we are not as likely to dislike, distrust, or malign them.

The best condition for effective cooperation with other people is a deep sense that one needs them for one's own security and well-being. If individual Protestants, Catholics and Jews believe that they need each other, cooperation will be possible and differences will not prevent it. Any individual who lacks that conviction will invent excuses for disliking out-group people if only to build up his own self-esteem or desire to appear superior. The Chaplain should learn to use effectively the Tri-Faith concept as a means for bringing together diverse religious groups.

VII. CONCLUSION

We have seen that prejudice is a very complexed social problem which threatens to undo our democratic way of life unless constructive measures are taken to eliminate or greatly reduce it. Prejudice arises from many sources. Our attack on it must begin with a frank recognition of its emotional nature rooted in insecurity and ignorance. Prejudice warps the personalities of both the prejudiced people and their victims. Society is prevented from making any real progress or development because of the tensions and hostilities engendered by prejudice.

The Armed Forces, within their own sphere, have developed some outstanding examples of racial coordination and integration in housing, transportation, religious worship, schooling, recreation and other aspects of community living. There is also a high degree of toleration among long-term military personnel toward people of different races, nationalities and religions. However, it cannot be claimed that prejudice has been eliminated

from the Armed Forces.

The Chaplain in the Armed Forces has a large share in the task of persuading men to grant to each other the same rights and dignities that they claim for themselves. The Chaplain must use every means available to convince men that they can live together amicably and cooperatively in spite of their differences. The Chaplain must exert the moral leadership needed to mobilize the total military society for a dramatic and successful war against prejudice and its effects upon human society. The Chaplain must enlist the support of all who believe in decency and justice and challenge them to behave in accordance with their belief. In this way the day will finally come when all men will be free to develop genuine health, strength and stability of personality.

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A DIGEST

of

"The Chaplain's Role In Combating Prejudice"

by

Chaplain Earle W. Hutchison

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A DIGEST OF "The Chaplain's Role In Combating Prejudice".

Prejudice is produced by emotional insecurity and ignorance which operate to warp the personalities of both the prejudiced and their victims. Not all prejudices have bad consequences. However, there are destructive and negative prejudices which threaten the integrity of individuals and of whole societies. Racial, religious, economic and social prejudices are examples of these types.

Disease, death and crime are part of the price the victim pays. Wasted potentialities, warped personalities, lowered economic standards, conflicts and tensions which are obstacles to progress are part of the price the prejudiced pays.

Whom we learn to like or dislike, love or hate will depend on our experiences in our homes, neighborhood, schools and their impressions on us. It is not easy to go against the conventional patterns of our society.

Prejudice might well be defined as forms of defense against loss of status. Some people are so insecure in their jobs or social position that they need someone to look down upon in order to bolster their own confidence. The fear of losing economic position is often expressed in terms of racial prejudice. Paradoxically, religion as generally practiced in America must be regarded as a passive force which keeps prejudice alive. Churches do little to counteract the negative racial attitudes produced by other forces in society.

The Armed Forces have vigorously programed opportunities for equal treatment for negro personnel. Yet Army life still reflects the prejudices and discriminations of civilian life. Personnel in long term military service do develop a certain tolerance toward people of different races and religions.

In the Character Guidance Program the Chaplain has an opportunity to discuss the whole range of problems involving interpersonal relationships. The Chaplain can show that prejudice is contrary to the principles of American Democracy. Opportunities for moral guidance are provided in the services of worship, informal discussion groups or formal Bible study hours.

In his daily contacts the Chaplain must show that there is a difference between paternalism, that is, loving down or loving people in "their place", and true religious respect of one human being for another.